

the people sat down and they drafted a petition, they found 1,500 circulators, they found 54,000 people to sign their petition and they got it on the ballot and it passed, it passed and our Constitution got amended in 1982. It passed because the Legislature in this state, unlike Iowa and Kansas and Missouri and Minnesota and Oklahoma and South Dakota and North Dakota, failed to act, and you would think the sky has fallen in. You would think it has fallen in in this state. The level of emotion...

SPEAKER NICHOL: One minute.

SENATOR V. JOHNSON: ...that is raised on this issue is remarkable, is absolutely remarkable. That same degree of fervor essentially is absent in our sister states who decided, as a matter of their state policy, that they were not going to permit certain kinds of corporations to own their farm and ranch land. I have filed this kill motion on this bill because, in my view, we would break faith, we would break faith with the first right of the people of our state, the initiative right, the first right, if only four short years after they took the process into their own hands we now said, we know better and we're going to give you the reverse side of that coin. Having closed that door for a period of 13 years, it hardly behooves us to quickly open it again in four. I'm certain that my colleagues who are farmers and ranchers, and who are more familiar with all the factual issues, will make their own points about the merits or the lack thereof of Initiative 300. But, for me, this is an issue of ballot box democracy, and keeping faith with the process.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Thank you. I have a list of 14 speakers. The list is headed up by those who had their lights on before and I'll call on you. If you do not wish to speak about the kill motion, just indicate so and we'll move on. Senator Rupp, then Senator Nelson and Senator Hefner. Senator Rupp first.

SENATOR RUPP: Mr. Speaker and colleagues, I oppose the kill motion by Senator Vard Johnson. I hope my better arguments will come later in the debate. I would like, at this time, just to put some general statements into the record because they are things that we are going to hear. First of all, I'd like to make it clear that good, sincere people are on both sides of this issue. We have to reach a point where we